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U.S. Department of Labor

Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives

As the United States Department of Labor Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives (CFBCI) begins its fourth year of operation, new opportunities for building local partnerships between faith-based and community organizations (FBCO), businesses and local Workforce Investment Boards (WIBs) are available.

The Assistant Secretary for Employment and Training Emily DeRocco announced the upcoming competition for the Workforce Boards through a Training and Employment Notice (TEN 15-03). The Solicitation for this grant will become available for applications beginning at the end of this month. The end goal of this new grant opportunity is to encourage WIBs to form long-term partnerships with FBCOs. These partnerships must develop and sustain service delivery mechanisms that will provide enhanced employment opportunities for hard-to-serve populations, including ex-offenders, welfare recipients and out-of-school youth.

Potential grant applicants will:

§ Create new financial and non-financial relationships with FBCOs and show how the Workforce Boards will sustain relationships beyond the grant cycle.

§ Identify up to three separate businesses or business sectors that will collaborate with the local WIB, One-Stop system, and FBCOs to provide a number of jobs with long-term career opportunities and hire qualified employees from disadvantaged neighborhoods.

§ Identify specific census tract(s) (neighborhoods) with high unemployment rates where current and potential FBCO resources (resource map) help hard-to-serve individuals prepare for and sustain employment.

Before and after these new grants are made, CFBCI will provide a variety of technical assistance resources to assist WIBs in applying for, implementing and managing their

grants. For information about the national technical assistance phone calls and March 12 conference that are sponsored by CFBCI and the National Association of Workforce Boards, please visit: www.nawb.org/fbcj. CFBCI encourages faith-based and community organizations concerned with workforce development to meet with their local Workforce Boards as those entities develop their proposals.

The Training and Employment Notice includes two reports. The first report, "Bridging the Gap: Meeting the Challenges of Universal Access Through Faith-Based and Community Partnerships", details the experiences of the United Way of Brevard County, Florida and Job Service North Dakota in working with FBCOs to expand access to the One-Stop Career Center System, and the range of services available to needy individuals.

The second report is called "Experiences from the Field: Fostering Workforce Development Partnerships with Faith-Based and Community Organization". This document focuses on a special technical assistance project sponsored by CFBCI that helped to integrate FBCOs at in the local planning and contracting processes of WIBs in Memphis, Tennessee and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. While the results of this project are preliminary in nature and certainly not exhaustive of the approaches available to WIBs in reaching out to FBCOs, some of the lessons-learned will be useful for WIBs interested in pursuing partnerships with FBCOs.

Finally, to support FBCOs that wish to begin, strengthen or expand relationships with employers, CFBCI has published "Strategic Business Partnerships" a guide to understanding national workforce trends, local workforce needs and strategies for FBCOs that need assistance in partnering with employers. This document is available at www.dol.gov/cfbci/8805-Faith-Based.pdf.

This new grant program and the technical assistance materials are the fruit of nearly 3 years of investigation, experimentation and application of CFBCI's twin mandates to remove regulatory and procedural barriers and foster models of partnership between the WIA system and FBCOs.

*This information resource is provided in partnership with the
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